



1st Senate District
State Capitol • PO Box 7882
Madison, Wisconsin 53707-7882

Alan Lasee

State Senator

Telephone: 608 266 3512
Fax: 608 267 6792

Email: Sen.Lasee@legis.wisconsin.gov
Web: www.legis.wi.gov/senate/sen01/news/

Testimony on Senate Joint Resolution 27

Senate Committee on Ethics Reform and Government

Operations

September 30, 2009

Thank you, Chairman Risser, and members of the committee for holding this hearing on Senate Joint Resolution 27 (SJR 27) today. This constitutional amendment abolishes the office of Lieutenant Governor.

As you may recall, the lieutenant governor was once the Senate President and could cast a deciding vote in the case of a tie. In 1979, however, a constitutional amendment was passed that allowed the Senate to choose its own presiding officer. Clearly the role has been substantially diminished.

Currently, the constitution provides that upon the governor's death, resignation or removal from office, the lieutenant governor becomes governor. In addition, if the governor is absent from the state, impeached or incapable of performing the duties of office, the lieutenant governor serves as acting governor.

Under SJR 27, the lieutenant governor is replaced by the Speaker of the Assembly in the line of gubernatorial succession. Currently, Arizona, Maine, New Hampshire, Oregon, West Virginia & Wyoming do not have a Lieutenant Governor. As an aside, there is a vacancy in Illinois and New Jersey has the position constitutionally established but has not elected one yet.

In this budget, Governor Doyle appropriated \$772,200 GPR for this office. Much like SJR 26, eliminating this office will provide a cost savings to taxpayers.

I ask that you join with me in taking another step in streamlining state government and supporting SJR 27. Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any questions that you might have.